Listing of all claims:

1. (Previously Amended) An apparatus for detecting a seal on a moving film, comprising;

a force transmitter, disposed to transmit a force from the film, wherein the force is created when the film moves with respect to the force transmitter;

a force sensor disposed to receive the transmitted force and provide a force signal in response thereto; and

a controller, disposed to receive the force signal and provide a seal signal in response thereto.

2. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the force sensor is an acoustic sensor.

3. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the force sensor is a mechanical sensor.

4. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the force sensor is a vibration sensor.

5. The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising an anvil disposed on a first side of a film path, wherein the force transmitter is disposed on a second side of the film path.

6. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the force sensor is a piezoelectric sensor.

7. The apparatus of claim 5, wherein the force transmitter is a quill disposed near a path of the film.

8. The apparatus of claim 6, wherein the quill is rigid.

9. The apparatus of claim 7, wherein the quill is comprised of stainless steel.

10. The apparatus of claim 6, wherein the quill is angled in a downstream film path direction, relative to normal to the film path.

11. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein the quill includes a radius surface abutting the film path, and the quill is held against the film path by a spring force.

12. The apparatus of claim 5, wherein the controller includes an amplitude comparator that receives the force signal and an amplitude threshold.

13. The apparatus of claim 5, wherein the controller includes a rise-time comparator that receives the force signal and a rise-time threshold.

14. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the controller includes a window circuit.

15. (Previously Amended) A method for detecting a seal on a moving film, comprising;

creating a force when the film moves relative to a sensor;

providing a force signal responsive to the seal; and

detecting the force and providing a seal signal in response thereto.

16. The method of claim 15, further comprising transmitting a force from the film.

17. The method of claim 15, wherein providing the force signal includes detecting an acoustic signal.

18. The method of claim 16, wherein providing the force signal includes detecting a mechanical signal.

19. The method of claim 16, wherein providing a force signal includes sensing a vibration.

20. The method of claim 15, further comprising transmitting the force with a quill disposed near a path of the film.

21. The method of claim 15, wherein providing a seal signal includes comparing an amplitude of the force with a threshold.

22. The method of claim 21, wherein providing a seal signal includes making the comparison during a window.

23. The method of claim 22, wherein providing a seal signal includes comparing a rise-time of the force with a threshold.

24. (Previously Amended) An apparatus for detecting a seal on a moving film, comprising;

means for providing a force signal in response to the seal and a force, wherein the force is created when the film moves;

means for detecting the force signal, coupled to the means for providing a force signal; and

means for providing a seal signal in response to the force signal, coupled to the means for detecting.

25. The apparatus of claim 24, further comprising means for transmitting a force from the film to the means for detecting, coupled to the means for detecting.

26. The apparatus of claim 25, wherein the means for detecting includes means for detecting an acoustic signal.

27. The apparatus of claim 25, wherein the means for detecting includes means for detecting a mechanical signal.

28. The apparatus of claim 25, wherein the means for detecting includes means for detecting a vibration signal.

29. The apparatus of claim 25, wherein the means for providing a seal signal includes means for comparing an amplitude of the force with a threshold.

30. The apparatus of claim 29, wherein the means for providing a seal signal includes means for making the comparison during a window.

31. The apparatus of claim 30, wherein the means for providing a seal signal includes means for comparing a rise-time of the force with a threshold.

32. (Previously Amended) A machine, comprising;

a force transmitter, disposed to transmit a force responsive to a seal on a bag, wherein the force is created as the bag moves relative to the transmitter;

a force sensor disposed to receive the transmitted force and provide a force signal in response thereto;

at least one upstream processing device, located upstream of the force transmitter;

at least one downstream processing device, located downstream of the force transmitter; and

a controller, disposed to receive the force signal and provide a seal signal in response thereto.

33. The apparatus of claim 32, wherein the force sensor is a mechanical sensor.

34. The apparatus of claim 32, further comprising an anvil disposed on a first side of a film path, wherein the force transmitter is disposed on a second side of the film path.

35. The apparatus of claim 34, wherein the force sensor is a piezoelectric sensor.

36. The apparatus of claim 35, wherein the force transmitter is a quill disposed near a path of the film.

37. The apparatus of claim 36, wherein the quill is angled downstream.

38. The apparatus of claim 37, wherein the quill includes a radius surface abutting the film path, and the quill is held against the film path by a spring force.

39. The apparatus of claim 38, wherein the controller includes a window circuit.

40. The apparatus of claim 32, wherein one of the at least one downstream devices is registered to the seal.

41. The apparatus of claim 40, wherein one of the at least one downstream devices includes a knife.

42. The apparatus of claim 40, wherein one of the at least one downstream devices and the force transmitter are in a common tension zone.

43. (Previously Amended) A method for processing a bag, comprising;

transporting the film from a first processing device to a seal sensing location, and past the seal sensing location;

providing a force signal responsive to the seal and a force at the seal sensing location, wherein the force is created by the seal moving;

detecting the force and providing a seal signal in response thereto;

transporting the film to a second processing device.

44. The method of claim 43, further comprising transmitting a force from the film.

45. The method of claim 44, wherein providing the force signal includes detecting a mechanical signal.

46. The method of claim 43, wherein providing a seal signal includes comparing an amplitude of the force with a threshold.

47. The method of claim 46, wherein providing a seal signal includes making the comparison during a window.

48. The method of claim 43, wherein providing a seal signal includes comparing a rise-time of the force with a threshold.